



June 28, 2021

To,  
The Montgomery County Council  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, MD

**Reg: Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 19-07 - Telecommunications Towers - Limited Use**

Dear Council President Hucker and Members of the Montgomery County Council.

In our letter of May 15, 2018, to the County Council and testimony of September 24, 2018, the Sierra Club expressed its concern about the energy use implications of ZTA 19-07. In our letter dated November 25, 2019, following the County Council's declaration of a climate emergency, the Sierra Club again urged a careful assessment of the energy use effects of the ZTA before its enactment.

ZTA 19-07 as amended and approved by the Council's PHED Committee, authorizes the expanded use of cellular communications towers and antennas, which could be placed on every block, 30 feet or less from people's homes. This may pose a greater risk of possible adverse health effects on all families who live in apartment buildings and condos at close proximity and the same elevation as the cell tower arrays. Families with lower income and communities of color who are already disproportionately affected by climate change might be most affected.

While upgrades to technology may be necessary and inevitable at some point, considering that the possible impacts of 5G wireless technology on the health and safety of residents and on the climate are still not clearly known, Sierra Club urges the County Council to ensure

- transparency and opportunity for public feedback and comment during various phases of the implementation process.

- monitoring of the potential adverse health effects.

- annual audit of the energy consumption increase required by 5G compared to the energy use reductions that the technology promises.

Thank you for your consideration of the Sierra Club recommendations.

Sincerely,

Shruti Bhatnagar, Chair  
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